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THE BABYLONIAN SAGE UT-NAPIŠTİM RŪQU

W. F. ALBRIGHT

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

THE BABYLONIAN FLOOD-HERO possessed two alternative names, *Atraḥasīs* ‘the very wise,’ which he shared with other primeval sages, and *Ut-napištím*, the reading of which was a bone of contention among scholars for three decades. A decade after Meissner’s discovery of the variant *Utanaisti^m* (*MVAG* 1902, p. 13, n. 1) had established the correct reading, Arno Poebel found its Sumerian prototype, *Zi-ud-BU-du*, which he pronounced *Ziugiddu*. Other scholars (Sayce, Zimmern, Langdon) suggested *Ziusuddu*, in the light of *CT* 18. 30. 9: *Zi-sud-da* = *Ut-na-pa(!)-aš(!)-te*. *Zisúdu*, (for *Ziusúdu*), furthermore, was identified with the Σκυθης of Lucian, Περὶ τῆς Σνρίης θεοῦ, 12, which Buttmann had happily emended to Σισυθης (CΙCΥΘΗC. for ΚΙCΥΘΗC). A number of scholars, however, retain the erroneous reading *Ziugiddu*.

Ziusúdu is written with the character *sud* not only *CT* 18. 30. 9, but also in Nippur 4611 (Langdon, *Sumerian Epic of Paradise*, no. 4); moreover, the writing *BU* in the Poebel text is far from disproving this testimony. Both in form and in origin the characters *bu* and *sud* are closely related; *sud* is *bu-gunu* (Delitzsch, *Entstehung*, p. 67; cf. Barton, *BA* 9. 172), and they share the values *arâku* (*sir*), and *rûqu* (*sud*). Decisive evidence for the reading *Ziusúdu* is furnished by the Semitic translation *Ut-napišti^m rûqu* ‘*Ut-napišti^m* the remote.’ The Sumerian equivalent of *rûqu* is *sud*, not *gid*, which means ‘long.’ In the light of such names as *Uta-zi-mu* ‘Uta is my life’ (Thureau-Dangin, *Lettres et contrats*, p. 68), the Semites took *Ut-zi* to be the name and *sud-du* as a participial appellative, an epithet like (*Siduri*) *Sabitu*, (*Ur-šanabi*) *malahu*, (*Uruk*) *supûri*, etc., and gave it the usual value, *rûqu* ‘distant.’ This disposes of the over-ingenuous suggestions made by some scholars; e. g., Langdon (*PSBA* 36. 190) regards *Ut-napištím* as an abbreviation for *Ut-napištím-arik*.

The original meaning of the name may have been ‘The submerged light of life’ (cf. the *mā sud-a* = *elippu^m tebitu^m* of

Tammuz), referring to his role as the Flood-hero.⁹ The mythical interpretation must be withheld until my monograph on the Babylonian Flood-story appears, as theories of the kind require a whole arsenal of evidence to win respect. Later, when the hero was translated to the end of the earth, at the *pî nárati* (originally the *source* of the rivers, as I shall show in a special article; the idea first occurred to me two years ago, since when I have collected a mass of material in its support), *sud* was misunderstood, and regarded as meaning 'distant.' The Semitic name, explained at first, we may suppose, as 'the day of life' (cf. *En-ud-tila* 'Lord of the day of life,' *CT* 16. 13. 21), was, again, etymologized as 'He found life,' *Utâ-napištîm*, alluding to his immortality; cf. the phrases in the Flood-tablet *balâta uttû* 'to find life,' *napšâti šê'u* = *balâta sahâru* (Meissner fragment) 'to seek life.' There seems to have been a certain haziness even about the second element, variously written (besides *ZI-tim*) *na-iš-tim* (the mistake is perhaps due to the dictator's misreading *pi* as *yi*, its usual value), *na-pa-aš-te* (see above), and *na-pu-uš-[tim]* (Ebeling, *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur*, no. 27).

Various questions connected with the post-diluvian career of the Babylonian Noah will be discussed elsewhere; in this connection, however, I wish to consider the role he plays as sage and instructor of men. Among the Hebrews Noah must have served in some such capacity; in the Jewish pseudepigraphon whose remains are imbedded in the Book of Enoch, Noah is the seer and teacher. In the Gilgames-epic we find Ut-napištîm exhorting Gilgames. The words put into his mouth remind us strongly of the address delivered to the hero by the nymph Siduri in the Meissner text. From a careful examination of the Assyrian recension, it appears certain that this address—in substance—has been transferred to Ut-napištîm by the Assyrian editors. In the early recension we read the words of Siduri: *"G(ilgames) ēš̄i tadá'al ? balâta" ša tasâhuru lâ tuttâ. inûma*

⁹ A more orthodox explanation may be based upon such phrases as *aga zi-ud-sud-du-a*, 'a tiara of life for distant days (to come)'; cf. Langdon, *Sum. Liturgical Texts*, No. 14, rev., l. 10.

¹⁰ The word *aiš* (cf. Poebel, *Hist. and Gram. Texts*, no. 152, col. 10. 3 — 11) = *ai* (‘N) with the adverbial ending.

ilâni ibnû auêlûta^m, mûta^m iškunû ana auêlûti^m, balâta^m ina qâtišunu içcabtû = 'Gilgames, whither dost thou wander? The life which thou seekest thou wilt not find. When the gods created mankind, death they appointed for mankind; life they kept in their own hand.' Ut-napištîm asks the same question, and finally (*GE* 10. 6. 36 ff.) says: "*Anunnaki ilâni rabûti pa[hrû], Mammîtu^m bânât šîmti ittišunu šimâta^m išî[ma]. ištâknû mûta u balâta, ša mûti ul uddû ûmêšu*" = 'The Anunnaki, the great gods, being assembled, Mammîtu, the creatress of fate, with them fixed destinies; they appointed death and life—the days of death are not made known.' The sharp distinction between gods and men in the older recension is softened and made less inhuman by the subordination of both to the eternal Fate, Mammît.

However, the Deluge-hero was regarded as a sage long before the Assyrian edition of *GE* appeared, tho it is quite possible, as will be seen, that his reputation in this field tended to increase. In an important fragment (Nippur 4611) published by Langdon (*Sumerian Epic of Paradise*, p. 90, plate IV A), Ziusúdu appears in the role of sage. Following Langdon's transcription we read, obv. l. 2): *Zi-ud-sud-du enim-bi [in-na-ab-dug-dug(?)]* = 'Ziusúdu addressed to him his discourse.' From his own copy, Langdon's reading (on the basis of the Poebel text, col. 4. 4-5, a very weak parallel) *Zi-ud-sud-du enim ga[ra-ab-dug-dug]* = 'O Zi-udsuddu, a command [I will speak to thee]' is erroneous. Accordingly, there is no evidence that the precepts given on the reverse were addressed to Ziusúdu by a god, or the goddess Nin-tud as Langdon believes. On the contrary, Ziusúdu is speaking himself, addressing his son (cf. rev. 6, 11, *dumu-mu* 'my son').² Conclusive evidence for this view is furnished by the fragment in Ebeling's publication already alluded to, where we read (rev. 2-4): "*Ut-nap[uštim] . . .] mârišu[. . .] Ut-napus[tim] ana šâšu iz(z)ákara ana mârišu(?)*". Here follows the discourse, consisting of precepts and moral injunctions. The obverse also contains moral injunctions. The best-preserved lines read as follows:—

² The familiar Hebrew form of gnomic discourse thus is already characteristic of Sumerian.

	OBVERSE	REVERSE
1	<i>ki-ma ri-b[-a-a-ti</i>	<i>mU<u>t-na-p[u-uš-tim</u></i>
2	<i>ri-i-ib[-tu</i>	<i>ma-ri-šu [.....]</i>
3	<i>a-bi-e la³ tu-uš [^.....]</i>	<i>mU<u>t-na-pu-uš [-tim</u></i>
4	<i>ma-ar-ti a-me[-li la ...]</i>	<i>a-šar ti [.....]</i>
5	<i>bēl e-mu-qi la [.....]</i>	<i>a-ma-at [.....]</i>
6	<i>id-la la tu-uš [.....]</i>	<i>mu-u-ra na [.....]</i>
7	<i>a-kil qar(!)-g[i³</i>	<i>šip-ri³ ša i-na bi [.....]</i>
8	<i>i-na pa-ni la ta [.....]</i>	<i>e-qi-el-ka [a-na</i>
9	<i>ki-ma sa-ar-ri [.....]</i>	<i>i-na šip-ri ši-ka [.....]</i>
10	<i>XII-ma sir-ri i[.....]</i>	<i>bit-ka a-na ri [.....]</i>
11	<i>[..] qar-ra-di [.....]</i>	<i>elāti la te-p[u-uš</i>
12	<i>[e-li] ilša-maš i[-ta-ab.]</i>	<i>u at-ta qa-t[-a</i>
13	<i>[..gar]-ra-di [.....]</i>	<i>a-na a-mi-li mu [.....]</i>
14		<i>a-šar qa-al[-tim</i>
15		<i>[a]-hu-tu a-na [.....]</i>
16		<i>[a-hu]-tu a[-na</i>
17		

In spite of the mutilated condition of the text, enough is left to enable a comparison with the wisdom-text last edited by Langdon, *PSBA* 1916. 105-116, 131-137. The resemblance is closest in § E, H, M, and P, especially in E, where l. 28-30 correspond to Ebeling, rev., l. 13-15: *u atta—u atta; ana lâ dînika—ana amêli muç[i]; ašar çal[tim]—ina pân çaltî-ma.* For rev. 12, *elâti lâ tep(p)uš*, cf. § H, l. 9, *šaltîš elîšunu ê tuktanniš* ‘thou shalt not act overbearingly toward them,’ and § P, l. 7, *šaplâti ê tâtâmî* ‘base words thou shalt not utter.’ *Rib[ati]* in obv. 1 and *rib[tu]* in obv. 2 remind one strongly of *ribâti* ‘recompense, vengeance’ in § M, l. 30. At all events, whether we have to do with different recensions of the same work or not, it is clear that the Sumerian text above-

³ Here we have the prohibitive (*lâ* with the present), whereas in the tablet of proverbs the precative (*i* with the preterite) is used.

⁴ In the tablet of proverbs several words which might be supplied here occur, as *tušamraq*, *tuštâmî*, *tuštamaṭṭi*, *tušânah*.

⁵ *Ākil qarqe* ‘slanderer’ is a familiar expression in the Assyrian gnomic literature.

⁶ The word *šipru* ‘matter, business’ occurs several times in the tablet of wisdom. Langdon’s ‘work’ is an inexact rendering. Semantically the word is an exact parallel to Coptic ΣΩΒ ‘thing, matter, business,’ from *h3 b* ‘send.’ The expression *lâ bâbil šipri* (B 16) means ‘worthless,’ like Coptic ΑΤΕΡΣΩΒ, (for *iwti-iri-*h3 b*).

mentioned, containing exhortations to altruism, and the Ebeling fragment are parts of an extensive wisdom literature, circulating under the name and authority of the wise Flood-hero, who is thus in some respects the prototype of the Hebrew Solomon. Just as Solomon is decked with the robes of *Hokhma*, so Ut-napišti takes the place of Siduri in the Gilgames-epic. In another place I hope to show that Siduri, the goddess of wisdom (*Ištar ša nîmêqi*), is to a certain extent the prototype of the Aramaic חכמתא (in the *Ahîqar*-romance), the Hebrew חכמָה, and the Mandean *Mandâ d'haijê*.

Langdon (*op. cit.* p. 107 f.) has begun to study the relation of the Babylonian wisdom literature to the Aramaic of the *Ahîqar*-recensions, all of which probably go back to Assyrian sources, tho the latter were doubtless greatly modified in transmission. I will add a few parallels which I have noted. The Syriac *Ahîqar* (Charles, *Pseudepigrapha*, p. 771, chap. 8. 17) has: 'My son, thou hast been to me like the dog that came to the potters' oven to warm himself, and after he was warm rose up to bark at them.' The comparison cannot be called very felicitous, nor is the situation quite clear. In a letter of Esar-haddon to the Babylonians, the king applies a similar proverb to the latter (Harper, *Letters*, no. 403, l. 5-7; cf. Johnston, *AJSL* 22. 244): *kalbu ša amêl pahari ina libbi utûni kî êruba, ana libbi amêl paharu unampah* = 'when the potter's dog entered into the oven, the potter lit the fire,' i. e., those who put themselves into bad situations will pay dearly for the consequences. The Assyrian proverb is obviously original; in being adapted to the purpose of the didact and employed to illustrate ingratitude it has lost its trenchancy and has become ridiculous. These satiric thrusts in chap. 8 at Nadan's ingratitude and unreliability, which so affect him that he finally swells up and bursts, in true folkloristic style, are in tone very much like Gilgames's comparisons directed at Ištar's faithlessness in the sixth tablet of the Nimrod-epic. In *Ahîqar*, chap. 8. 6, we read: 'My son, thou hast been like the man who saw his companion shivering from cold, and took a pitcher of water and threw it over him.' The simile is decidedly far-fetched, since *Ahîqar*, of course, was in prosperous and comfortable circumstances until betrayed by his nephew. The Assyrian, however, most aptly likens Ištar to a skin-bottle which drenches its bearer

(*GE* 6. 38). Ahîqar was Nadan's support, so this comparison would be particularly effective. Perhaps the original Aramaic editor had more literary skill than his successors.

In closing, an interesting parallel between the Aramaic and the Syriac *Aḥiqar* may be noted. *Pap. El.*, no. 53, l. 14 has, תְּרֵתִין מָלֵן שְׁפִירָה וַיַּתְּלִתָּה רְחִימָה לְשֻׁמֶּשׁ שְׁתָה חֲמֹרָא etc. The first thing mentioned as *tâbu elî Šamaš* is 'the one who drinks wine and offers a libation.'⁵ Similarly in the Greek symposia a libation was first poured out to Dionysos. Syriac A (cf. Nöldeke, *Zum Achîqar*, p. 36, v. 10) gives the following piece of advice: 'Giess deinen Wein auf die Gräber der Gerechten und trink ihn nicht mit den Frevlern.' The injunction to pour the wine out on the graves of the righteous is not at all natural in this connection. Apparently the Christian editor, being displeased with the heathen practise of pouring out libations to Dionysos, changed it to an exhortation to abstain from convivial gatherings, and, if a libation must be made, to make it in honor of the righteous dead. Of course, this practise is fundamentally quite as objectionable as the other, but such casuistic distinctions are not at all uncommon.

⁵ נִקְרָא 'to libate' is a new word, to which Dr. Seidel first called my attention. The word is, of course, connected with *naqû* 'libate,' and even more closely with *nâqu* (*JAOS* 36. 231, where my combination with *nâqu*, 'lament,' is erroneous; this *nâqu* is originally onomatopoetic, belonging with נְגַנָּק, נְגַנָּק, نَعْقَل, etc.).